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the plan is to be slightly changed by giving only one lecture each week and increasing the section work to two exercises. The experiment will be tried with considerable misgiving, for it means from fourteen to sixteen hours of section work for the two instructors, and whether they can initiate stimulating discussion under these somewhat monotonous conditions remains to be determined.

Every teacher undoubtedly has an ideal which he would like to carry out. If there were time, my present inclination would be to devote the first half-year entirely to descriptive economics, giving particular attention first, to the conditions of production, the factory system, the corporation, wages, agriculture, and the marketing of goods; and second, to the monetary and financial organization including banking, stock and produce exchanges, speculation, and taxation. During this term I would carefully avoid theoretical analysis and discussion; with this foundation I would take up in the second term the theory and try to make it a course in logic in which economic data furnish the illustrative material.

As the subject is now taught, it seems to me there is great danger that the student will too often leave the subject with but a hazy notion of its real significance. He has no systematic knowledge of the economic world, nor any well-defined theory of its workings. Conditions have changed during the past twenty-five years. Economic life has become more complicated and youth does not have the opportunity to become so intimately acquainted with economic processes. There must therefore be a far greater insistence upon laboratory methods which will provide the missing experience.

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#### SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF GENERAL ECONOMICS

In the first place, let the teacher of elementary economics take as his motto: "Beware of the man of one book"; and let him impress this upon his class. The one book that is taken as a text—and there always should be a text—ought to be thor-

oughly mastered; and I go so far as to say the definitions should be memorized. The reason for committing to memory definitions is that every word of a good definition means something and it is not likely to be understood thoroughly unless it is memorized.

When the author being studied is understood, the students may be allowed, and to a certain extent encouraged, to criticize the author, but never until they understand the author. The frequent difficulty is that this order is reversed and students criticize before they understand, with the result that their thought is vague and confused.

The students of elementary economics should have presented to them a clear-cut, well-defined system of thought. This should in one way be taught dogmatically, in another sense not. Let me explain my paradox. In elementary teaching a certain element of dogmatism is pedagogically necessary. In the case of economics the dogmatism consists in learning the author who is being studied and confining attention first of all to his thought. The teacher should, however, say frankly, "There are other authors just as able as our author, perhaps a good deal abler, who looks at things differently. The last word has not by any means been said upon any of the important theoretical and practical subjects in economics; but, as a basis for further work, we will endeavor to understand this one writer."

I trust I make my point clear. Do not confuse the beginner with a multiplicity of ideas. I believe this confusion is the chief evil in the teaching of elementary economics at the present time. The students have all sorts of vague, indefinite ideas, but no clear ideas at all.

Some reading should be assigned in connection with the text, especially if the text is a brief one. But let the assigned reading, as it were, grow up out of the text and illustrate it.

The teacher should endeavor to awaken interest in the student and show the significance of a theory before attempting its scientific exposition. Take the theory of rent, for example. Let the teacher show the great rôle it is playing in the history of the present time and the rôle it is likely to play. The lords and

the budget in England would be a good illustration. When a student sees what it is all about, his interest will carry him through the theoretical exposition. The theory of monopoly affords another illustration. In my opinion the economic history of the world is, to some considerable extent, turning upon the ideas of monopoly. Great cases are being fought before courts which now turn upon this idea. If the teacher can bring it clearly before his class that this idea is a great world-force, their interest will be aroused and they will follow difficult theoretical expositions.

One other injunction to the elementary teacher is this: Adopt as a motto "Look and see." The trouble with most of us is that "having eyes we see not." We are surrounded by the most wonderful economic phenomena and are blind to them. Use illustrations taken from everyday life and from the community in which you live, and cultivate the power of observing economic phenomena—a power less cultivated than the power of observing natural phenomena.

I am inclined to think that a course in elementary economics should extend through the year, but should be so organized that those who can give only one semester to economics should be able to drop out at the end of the first semester. The first semester course should be a culture course and a preparation for life. It should not attempt the solution of economic problems, but it should put those who take the course in a good position to deal with the problems as they arise. In fact, all the work in economics ought to be more a training of men for the solution of practical problems than a solution of practical problems which are always changing in their concrete manifestations.

The second semester course should plow the ground more deeply and should be designed for those who can give more time to economics, and especially for those who expect to specialize in economics.

Finally, my feeling is that the course in elementary economics should cover the entire field, including finance and the history of economic thought in a general way. Then all those who teach

more advanced courses can assume a certain amount of knowledge as something on which to build.

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### THE GENERAL COURSE A CITIZENSHIP COURSE

Students who take the elementary course in economics from their interest in the subject include those who take only the elementary course and those who take it as a preliminary to more or less specialization.

It is sometimes assumed that the interests of the two classes of students mentioned can be met only by courses different in content and method of teaching. For students who are taking the course as their only work in the subject, it is held by some that what is needed is a general survey, including a treatment of all topics in the field of economics; while for the second class of students—those who are taking the course for later specialization—the best course is not a microcosmic view of the field, but a “thorough grounding in principles” as a basis for their future intense specialization on the supposition that their future specialized courses will supply for them the complete survey that is desirable.

The advocates of the latter point of view buttress their position by saying that the first plan emphasizes the knowledge of the subject, while the second emphasizes the importance of training.

A disinterested teacher or student, however, is likely to ask whether the two views are really inconsistent. A proper answer can be given only by asking some other questions. We need to know, first of all, the educational needs of the students. Why do two or three hundred young men and women fill up the classroom in the course in elementary economics? For what do they want the course? A few of them are to become “economists.” That is to say, they are to teach and write economics. They are to be specialists. A larger number will probably teach the subject either by itself, or in connection with history or civics in the secondary schools or smaller colleges. Far the largest number of the